

RIVER STAGES AND FLOODS FOR OCTOBER 1947

C. R. JORDAN

Precipitation during October was very irregular over the United States. Several areas of considerable size received more than twice the normal precipitation for October while other areas experienced severe drought. The eastern and southern parts of the country were particularly dry except for the southeastern corner. Precipitation was also deficient in the Great Lakes region, Montana, and eastern Idaho. Rainfall was much above normal in Florida, Georgia, and most of the Carolinas; in the Central Mississippi Valley; the Dakotas; and the Northwest, extending southeastward through Wyoming and Colorado.

Severe flood conditions prevailed over southern Florida, and flash floods occurred during the month on the Swannanoa River in North Carolina and at Galax, Va., on Chestnut Creek. Some light overflow was reported in northwestern Washington. Severe drought conditions prevailed in the northeastern States and also in the extreme Southwest.

Rains accompanying the hurricane of mid-September resulted in severe flooding in the southern part of Florida. Additional rain, ranging from 2 to 8 inches, during the remainder of September aggravated the flooding. Another hurricane crossed Florida on the night of October 11-12, preceded or accompanied by severe thunderstorms and heavy rainfall over southeast Florida and much of the Everglades. The U. S. Geological Survey reports that a recording rain gage operated by that agency in Hialeah showed 6 inches of rain in 75 minutes, a reading possibly exceeded at other places. Lake Okeechobee reached a stage of 18.7 feet on October 29, the highest stage since records were begun in 1915. The stage was well below the critical height of the levee, but the surface of the lake was several feet higher than surrounding land, which prevented any gravity drainage. Most of south Florida resembled a great lake. The Geological Survey reports that there were roughly 12,000,000 acre-feet of water on the Everglades, an amount comparable with the largest storage reservoirs in the country. Damage to crops and property was very high.

Heavy rains over a small area near Mount Mitchell, N. C., on the morning of the 17th caused a flash flood on the Swannanoa River. The total for the storm, spread over 2½ days at Mount Mitchell, was 7.21 inches, with the heaviest rains occurring during the night of the 16th and 17th. Flood waters were mostly run-off from the

North Fork of the Swannanoa; run-off on the Bee Tree Fork was retained in the Asheville water supply dam. There was minor damage to homes and crops.

Another flash flood swept down narrow Chestnut Creek into Galax, Va., in the early morning of October 18, carried several houses in its wake, and forced several families to evacuate their homes. Furniture factories lost valuable stores of lumber; several factories were affected by water entering their boiler rooms; and the city's water supply pumping system was interrupted for a time. The water receded rapidly after reaching a crest.

Minor floods occurred in the Roanoke River Basin as a result of heavy rains on the eastern slopes of the mountains in North Carolina and southwestern Virginia, from October 8 to 12.

At Pueblo, Colo., an unseasonable rain and electric storm began at 7:26 p. m., October 7, flooding streets and basements and disrupting power service. The storm ended soon after midnight. Damage was relatively light.

Minor overflow was reported in northwestern Washington as a result of moderate to heavy rains over the area on the afternoon and evening of the 18th, following several days of light to moderate precipitation. The rises were rapid and the crests passed rapidly downstream.

FLOOD STAGE REPORT FOR OCTOBER 1947

[All dates in October unless otherwise specified]

River and station	Flood stage	Above flood stages— dates		Crest 1	
		From—	To—	Stage	Date
ATLANTIC SLOPE DRAINAGE					
Dan: Danville, Va.	<i>Feet</i> 11	10	11	<i>Feet</i> 14.0	11
Roanoke:					
Weldon, N. C.	31	13	14	33.6	13
Williamston, N. C.	10	1	6	11.1	4
Broad: Blairs, S. C.	14	15	23	10.7	18
		25	25	16.2	25
PACIFIC SLOPE DRAINAGE					
<i>Skagit Basin</i>					
Sauk: Sauk, Wash.	10	19	19	12.1	19
Skagit: Mt. Vernon, Wash.	22	19	19	22.0	19
<i>Stillaguamish Basin</i>					
South Fork: Arlington, Wash.	20.8	19	19	24.76	19
Stillaguamish: Arlington, Wash.	62.8	19	19	63.9	19
<i>Snohomish Basin</i>					
Snoqualmie: Tolt, Wash.	51.8	19	20	54.7	20
Snohomish: Snohomish, Wash.	20	18	20	27.2	19

1 Provisional.